

# **Let's Keep this Conversation Going**

**Steps to ensure that stakeholders get engaged and stay engaged  
through the ESSA development process and beyond**

**November 2016**



## THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress and the public.

### Let's Keep this Conversation Going:

Steps to ensure that stakeholders get engaged and stay engaged through the ESSA development process and beyond

### COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

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## Overview

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) asks states to engage with a wide array of stakeholders throughout the development of their plans, encouraging outreach that goes well beyond the organizational leaders with whom the state education agency is most familiar. The purpose behind this outreach is to ensure that the state's ESSA plan truly represents the needs of every student, including those from communities whose voices are not typically heard.

This level of outreach requires a new approach to stakeholder engagement that goes well beyond the traditional level of outreach. States need to think creatively about how to reach these new groups, and even more importantly, how to build relationships with them so they can continue to be engaged throughout the development and implementation of the state's plan and beyond.

This tool was developed to be a companion to "[Let's Get this Conversation Started](#)," a comprehensive guide to stakeholder engagement published by the Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with national civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent historically underserved communities in June 2016. The guide detailed 10 key steps to authentic, meaningful stakeholder engagement:

1. Clarify your goals
2. Work with partner organizations to identify and engage with your stakeholders
3. Speak to your audience
4. Use multiple vehicles
5. Identify your best ambassadors
6. Ask for input before decisions are made, and use it
7. Keep your materials simple and brief
8. Communicate early and often
9. Keep your team informed
10. Turn these new connections into long-term relationships

This tool aligns with the original 10 engagement steps and offers an array of engagement strategies and successful state examples. All of the strategies – from the traditional ones to the exemplars – represent ways that SEAs can transform their current approach to engagement into a series of impactful efforts to reach, engage and build lasting relationships with all stakeholders.



*In response to state requests, this guide also includes specific strategies marked with a lightbulb that are designed specifically to help SEAs engage with hard-to-reach stakeholders and those from disability and/or historically underserved communities.*

## Getting Started

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Engagement Planning:</b> Develop rough plan based on state's strategic vision for education and past engagement efforts.	Reach out to diverse partner organizations, community leaders and legislature to discuss draft engagement plan and how they want to be engaged.	Build your plan around public engagement activities timed with key moments in your development so input can inform your strategy. Build long-term engagement through implementation into your plan.	<b>Massachusetts</b> held a <a href="#">"poster convening with the Rennie Center</a> during the Summer of 2016. Guests were invited to develop a poster outlining their vision for how the state could revise its accountability system, and the developers of the ones that received the most votes were invited to present at the session.
<b>Roles and Responsibilities:</b> Assign responsibility to a member of the SEA staff.	Assign responsibility for engagement to a key senior leader in the SEA whose other responsibilities are either related or are delegated to someone else to ensure he or she has the time needed to commit to this work.	Identify community leaders and key partners who can partner with, play key roles and support the SEA lead throughout the engagement process.	
<b>Requirements:</b> Review who is <i>required</i> to be at the table based on ESSA requirements and determine which groups the SEA has not actively engaged in the past.	Leverage national civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities to make connections to new stakeholders.	Proactively seek out state-level civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities and personally invite them to participate in the process or appoint them to a standing committee that will provide ongoing input and feedback.	<b>Pennsylvania</b> recognized their capacity challenges early in the process and <a href="#">asked CESSO to partner with them and to lead their stakeholder engagement listening tour</a> .
<b>Timeline:</b> Map out your planning and implementation timeline and post on the state's ESSA website.	Share the planning and implementation timeline with stakeholders. Inform key elected officials including the Governor's office and state board about important dates early to ensure they can participate.	Explain what each of the milestones on the planning and implementation timeline represent, and when stakeholder input will be most helpful.	<b>Vermont</b> used their <a href="#">ESSA homepage</a> to explain and clearly define the four lenses they will use to identify solutions in the development of their state plan: equity, alignment, efficiency and practicality.

## 1. Clarify your goals.

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Vision:</b> Develop the vision at the SEA and then share with your stakeholders.	Develop some broad themes for your state's vision and then meet with stakeholders to refine and strengthen the vision based on their input.	Hold a series of public forums to solicit input that can be used to develop the state's vision; share drafts as it evolves for continued input.	<b>Hawaii</b> developed a <a href="#">video</a> to map out how their state strategic plan refresh will dovetail with ESSA planning. The video invites viewers to weigh-in and get involved in both the strategic planning and ESSA process.
<b>Disseminate:</b> Publish a press release with details about the state's vision.	Publish details of the state's vision on social media, write OpEds about it and publish in regional and local media.	Discuss the state's vision publicly at community meetings; include key points in all public comments.	<b>New Hampshire</b> is holding a <a href="#">listening tour</a> this fall to gather input that will be used to develop the state's vision for education. As part of this effort, they are continually reinforcing how the state's initiatives and priorities are based on the needs of New Hampshire students and educators and that the ESSA plan will support that work.
<b>Make connections:</b> Build key points about your state's vision and goals into all talking points and written materials.	Remember that to the general public ESSA itself is not what matters, but how the state's plan will impact the state's schools and the education that children receive.	Continually make connections to how the state's vision ties to not just ESSA but to other key initiatives underway in the state to reinforce how all of the work is important and tied together.	<b>Ohio</b> publishes <a href="#">discussion guides in advance of regional stakeholder engagement sessions</a> to ensure that participants know what to expect and can come with ideas and questions.
<b>Transparency:</b> Hold public forums to discuss your state's vision; share key decision points in advance.	Review the SEA's engagement strategy with local civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities to identify any gaps in the plan.	Lay out the entire engagement process publicly for stakeholders so they can clearly see where to participate in the process and how other voices will be engaged along the way.	
<b>Stakeholder role:</b> Explain why the state is engaging stakeholders in this process.	Clearly define the role of stakeholders, including what decision-making authority they may or may not have.	Ask stakeholders to communicate with their communities about the role they are playing and urge their partners and friends to get involved.	

## 2. Work with partner organizations to identify and engage with your stakeholders.

Instead of just this	Try doing this...	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Identifying stakeholders:</b> Meet with the leaders of the state's major associations to discuss how they can help.	Compare who is required to be at the table under ESSA regulations against who has and has not been actively engaged in the past; collaborate with partners to identify and fill gaps with representatives from groups not previously heard by the SEA.	Proactively reach out to specific communities and regions of your state that have not been part of reform conversations in the past and leverage state and national civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities to help.	<b>Delaware</b> invited community stakeholders to participate in two rounds of <a href="#">community conversations</a> , posting discussion summaries after each round..
<b>Engage partners:</b> Urge partner organizations to host meetings to discuss ESSA related topics.	Provide partner organizations with content to share at their meetings.	Co-host meetings with partner organizations to speak directly to their stakeholder groups. Empower organizations to host their own feedback gathering sessions.	<b>District of Columbia</b> created targeted <a href="#">opportunities</a> for each stakeholder group to connect with DC OSSE rather than hosting a broad set of Listening Tour stops open to all stakeholders. All notes have been posted online for public review.
<b>Accessibility:</b> Schedule meetings at different times during the day and week to accommodate varying work schedules of stakeholders.	Work with partner organizations to identify venues across the state for public meetings where stakeholders will feel most comfortable .	Record the public meetings and disseminate via a live feed online when they occur and make videos available on the ESSA website and on the sites run by partner organizations.	<b>Hawaii</b> teamed with teacher fellows for their <a href="#">#HIQualityEd</a> campaign to host a series of 108 focus groups on six islands and administered an online survey that generated more than 1200 responses for its Strategic Plan refresh, which drives the ESSA planning.
<b>Accessibility:</b> Work with civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities in advance to identify key areas of concern and develop materials and discussion questions that address those areas.	Take extra care to make sure engagement opportunities are accessible to all stakeholders by having materials translated into multiple languages, having translation services available (including American Sign Language) and holding at least one public meeting in another language.	Create opportunities for stakeholders to opt into discussions that are of particular interest to them by hosting topical webinars, public forums and online discussions.	<b>Minnesota</b> created a timeline and <a href="#">ESSA overview flier</a> that was translated in Hmong, Spanish and Somali.

### 3. Speak to your audience.

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Materials and messages:</b> Develop one set of talking points to use with every group.	Differentiate materials and public comments to address the unique issues and concerns of specific stakeholder groups.	Have materials reviewed by civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities for tone, to ensure key issues are addressed and to review for cultural competency.	<b>Arizona</b> published their ESSA survey and some ESSA overview materials in Spanish on a <a href="#">special page</a> on their website.
<b>Contacts:</b> Create a generic email address for stakeholders to use to get more information.	Assign a staff person to monitor the email address and respond within 48 hours to questions using clear language.	Track questions that are raised and post an FAQ online with clear, detailed answers to respond to common concerns and issues.	<b>Kansas</b> solicited questions from the public to inform the creation of a series of <a href="#">FAQs and other resources</a> .
<b>Social media:</b> Push out quick updates on your process on the SEA's Twitter feed and link to updated information on the state's website.	Establish a unique Twitter handle that the SEA, state board or other state agencies can use to push out all updates on ESSA; promote initially on the SEA's main Twitter feed.	Urge stakeholders to send comments and questions on ESSA to the SEA via Twitter; task someone at the SEA with monitoring the account and generating prompt responses.	<b>Minnesota</b> held a <a href="#">Twitter Town Hall</a> to discuss ESSA with a wider array of stakeholders online; the full discussion was posted on their <a href="#">website</a> .  <b>New Jersey</b> posted their online ESSA <a href="#">survey</a> about school performance reporting in English and in <a href="#">Spanish</a> .
<b>Public meetings and webinars:</b> Hold multiple forums and webinars open to the public.	Host public meetings at different times of the day and week to make it easier for more people to attend.	Hold meetings and webinars at different times of day and on weekends, or host virtual town hall meetings that are easily accessible through Facebook Live or Twitter.	<b>Wyoming</b> held five <a href="#">virtual town hall meetings</a> , each on a different aspect of ESSA. The presentations and audio were then posted on the state's ESSA website.
<b>Accessibility:</b> Publish English-language materials.	Translate materials into multiple languages; include helpful visuals, graphics and animation accessible for individuals with disabilities.	Have translators present at public forums or host in-person discussions in other languages. Partner with community organizations to help you with this.	

## 4. Use multiple vehicles.

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
 <b>Meetings:</b> Hold regional town hall meetings at schools and public facilities.	Host meetings at non-traditional sites such as community centers or churches; hold meetings at times and in locations convenient to different stakeholders.	Co-host meetings with community organizations in their offices; ask to be put on the agenda of community meetings that were previously scheduled to gather input from their stakeholders.	<b>California</b> sends a weekly email update on their plan development to subscribers to their <a href="#">ESSA listserv</a> .  <b>Delaware</b> released four online surveys on different areas of ESSA (support for all students, supporting excellent educators, school support and improvement, and measures of school success and reporting) to generate focused input and posted <a href="#">results</a> online.
 <b>Sharing information:</b> Post information about public meetings on the state's ESSA website.	Utilize social media to spread information about meetings and updates, tagging advocacy and community organizations to generate additional interest.	Provide schools and community and advocacy organizations with sample tweets, language and fliers they can use to share information on their websites, in their newsletters and on social media.	  <b>Oklahoma</b> 's ESSA homepage features a video message to parents on ESSA.
 <b>Contacts:</b> Gather contact information from stakeholders who participate in forums or online surveys and add them to your existing contact list for continued engagement	Ask stakeholders to identify their preferred means of communication (email, regular mail, text, etc.) and topics of interest and create contact lists based on those responses.	Create topic-specific listservs and task SEA staff to continually use them to share information and pose questions to facilitate an ongoing dialogue.	  <b>Tennessee</b> posted guiding questions from their listening tour on two online feedback forms: one for parents and one for students.
 <b>Outreach vehicles:</b> Boost your use of social media to publish information about ESSA more frequently, and to drive traffic back to your SEA's website.	Leverage other options of reaching stakeholders, such as texting or publishing updates in the newsletters of community organizations and school newsletters.	Talk with civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities about the best tools to use to reach stakeholders and incorporate those methods into your strategy.	  <b>Vermont</b> created a dedicated hashtag for their ESSA work (#ESSAinVT) and encouraged participants attending a two-day ESSA retreat to use it to share their input on social media.  <b>Virginia</b> used social media and external partners to share their online survey, and received more than 12,000 responses.

## 5. Identify your best ambassadors.

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Identify ambassadors:</b> Reach out to the leaders of the organizations most familiar to the SEA.	Connect with advocacy and community organizations to identify new partners with close ties to stakeholder groups less familiar to the SEA who can play the ambassador role.	Provide all stakeholder ambassadors with talking points and guidance, training and tools on ESSA so they are prepared to answer questions and know what input will be most useful.	<b>Arkansas</b> invited stakeholders to sign up to be <a href="#">ESSA Ambassadors</a> to spread the word and advocate for students and subgroups.
<b>Prepare ambassadors:</b> Rely on the leaders of the statewide associations to serve as the SEA's ambassadors.	Recruit ambassadors from existing advisory groups. Provide training, guidance, presentations and tools so they can answer questions.	Make time to provide information to and meet with tribal leaders to hear their perspective on how the state's ESSA plan will impact their students and families.	<b>California</b> is hosting regional stakeholder meetings and creating <a href="#">toolkits</a> for local use to support additional local engagement activities. These include facilitator instructions, an ESSA overview, video on the state's plan drafts, and guidance for providing feedback.
<b>Parents and families:</b> Work with the statewide parent organizations to identify parents who can serve as regional ambassadors.	Urge parent ambassadors to organize local meetings, particularly in underserved communities, to gather input and help answer questions.	Meet regularly with the parent ambassadors to co-develop and review draft parent-facing materials and ensure they address the right issues and are free of jargon.	<b>Mississippi</b> developed an <a href="#">ESSA communications toolkit</a> for district leaders, including a community focus group questionnaire, Powerpoint presentation, ESSA background, and a "did you know" document.
<b>National resources:</b> Post links to helpful resources developed by national organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities on your state's ESSA website.	Proactively disseminate national resources to your ambassadors for use with their stakeholders.	Closely review, integrate and reference some key messages used in resources provided by national civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities into some of your state's materials.	<b>Pennsylvania</b> published a <a href="#">list</a> of all of their workgroup members along with a summary of the issues they will address.
<b>Recruitment:</b> Recruit ambassadors to speak on the SEA's behalf from existing advisory groups.	Ask the leaders of civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities to nominate potential ambassadors.	Host regular meetings with ambassadors to discuss the input they have heard, discuss any questions they have and to provide them with updated information.	<b>Washington</b> posts a <a href="#">list of key stakeholders</a> involved in their ESSA development process, detailing who they represent so they can be reached by stakeholders.

## 6. Ask for input before decisions are made, and use it.

Instead of just this	Try doing this...	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Meetings:</b> Set up a regular schedule of meetings with key stakeholders at the start of the process.	Work with the ESSA development team to identify key points in the process when specific feedback from stakeholders will be most helpful and work with stakeholder groups to gather input on those topics at the right time.	Build in time to revisit decisions along the way and to review them with stakeholders to ensure new information and feedback can be used to inform the process.	<b>Colorado</b> created an online request form for people who wanted to become “critical review partners” and offer official feedback on draft plans to the <a href="#">ESSA Hub Committee</a> .
<b>Note-taking:</b> Assign one SEA staff member to take notes at all meetings.	Create a note-taking template to ensure notes captured at different meetings are aligned; provide brief guidelines in advance.	Ask some stakeholders to provide note-taking support at public meetings and compare them with staff notes later to ensure nothing is missed.	<b>Connecticut</b> rolled out <a href="#">a new 5-year strategic plan</a> that included a new multiple-measures accountability system in June 2016, and stakeholders have asked that they not revisit those decisions. For ESSA they are reinforcing the work that was already done and highlighting areas where some changes can be made to strengthen the new system.
<b>Identify themes:</b> Post an updated draft of the state's plan on the state's website each time it is revised.	Create summaries after each round of public meetings to summarize big themes that were heard and to highlight how they will be incorporated into the plan.	Create annotated updates of each section of the state's plan to highlight changes and to indicate which stakeholders had suggested them.	
<b>Summarize input:</b> Post regular updates on the SEA's ESSA website.	Publish summary notes after meeting with stakeholders to highlight key themes that were heard and big takeaways.	Send summary notes to stakeholders and tribal leaders after meeting with them to highlight what was heard and how their input will be used. Note any key themes that will not be included in the ESSA plan and, when possible, indicate why it will not be used.	<b>Oregon</b> established and ran work groups in four areas to inform the development of the state plan, and provided links to <a href="#">agendas and presentations</a> from the joint work group meetings.
<b>Define parameters:</b> Clearly define what issues are on the table when engaging with stakeholders and explain why some topics are no longer up for discussion.	Proactively seek out and appoint representatives from all major stakeholder groups to advisory groups that have some decision-making authority.	Work with civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities to identify stakeholders to appoint to ongoing committees that will continue to meet throughout ESSA implementation and beyond to advise on refinements.	

## 7. Keep your materials simple and brief.

Instead of just this	Try doing this...	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Meeting summaries:</b> To ensure transparency throughout the state's process, post all notes and materials from public meetings and webinars on the SEA's website.	Summarize the notes into high level takeaways that can be easily digested. Circulate and post these summaries in addition to posting the raw notes.	Work with partner organizations to review meeting summaries before they are distributed to ensure they are written in clear language and address the issues of greatest concern to stakeholders.	<b>Delaware</b> parents meet informally to "translate" DOE materials into consumable information for parents.  <b>Kentucky</b> has a <a href="#">dedicated ESSA</a> page on its website that includes easy-to-understand content and graphics
<b>Materials for partners:</b> Ask partners to post updates on the state's ESSA plan on their website or in their newsletter.	Develop sample newsletter, website, social media and presentation content for districts and partners to use in their written communications.	Meet with partners regularly to check in on how the content you're providing has been received and to generate ideas for additional materials or information that would be helpful based on questions they've been asked or needs that have arisen.	<b>Louisiana</b> published a summary of their statewide listening tour and meetings in an <a href="#">overview report</a> that included ways to provide additional input.
<b>Visuals:</b> Incorporate pictures and graphics into all materials whenever possible to simplify the content and make it easier to digest.	Work with an in-house or external designer to develop clear infographics that can be incorporated into materials, posted on your website and disseminated on social media.	Work with an in-house or external videographer to develop short, informational videos in multiple languages that can be posted online and shared with partner organizations to be used at their meetings.	<b>Minnesota</b> created 11 one-page topic area <a href="#">fact sheets</a> for use with more targeted groups (accountability, educator quality, well-rounded, etc.).  <b>Montana</b> developed an <a href="#">infographic</a> to depict the state's ESSA plan.
<b>Summary documents:</b> Develop and disseminate written summary documents that highlight key decisions that need to be made and maps out the state's process.	Develop one-pagers on all of the key topics discussed during the public sessions to summarize the discussion and how the input will be incorporated into the state's ESSA plan.	Where possible, incorporate visuals or graphics to represent data or complex issues to make all written and posted materials easier for stakeholders to quickly review and understand.	<b>Pennsylvania</b> <a href="#">publishes</a> the notes, presentations and handouts from every stakeholder session on their ESSA website.  <b>Ohio</b> created a 12-part <a href="#">webinar series</a> on detailed issues related to ESSA and created accompanying topic discussion guides for participants.

## 8. Communicate early and often.

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Online content:</b> Post all ESSA-related materials on the SEA's ESSA site; add tabs to separate materials by topic or audience.	Include documents in other languages as well as a clearly worded summary of the process, a timeline and notifications about opportunities to contribute.	Post an online survey to generate continuous feedback on how the SEA can improve transparency, content or engagement efforts.	<b>Colorado</b> developed an <a href="#">ESSA blog</a> they update regularly with summaries of meetings, upcoming decisions and explanations of key topics.
<b>Updated information:</b> Post updates on the progress of your plan on the state's website.	Proactively disseminate updates through newsletters and email blasts that go out to all stakeholders that have been engaged in some way.	Provide civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities with regular updates they can include in their newsletters and email outreach.	<b>Idaho</b> published a <a href="#">progress report</a> early in their ESSA plan development to detail what's happened to date and map out next steps.
	Develop an ESSA-focused blog that the SEA can update regularly with information on key topics and explanations of what any policy changes will mean for students and teachers.	Share blog posts widely on social media; ask partner organizations to cross-post your blog updates on their own blogs or websites.	<b>Louisiana's</b> <a href="#">ESSA site</a> contains a detailed timeline for development of the state plan, list of upcoming public meetings, summaries of meeting notes and video recordings, and a link to their draft framework.
<b>Workgroups:</b> Post a list of the state's topical workgroups on the ESSA website.	Publish a list of the members of each workgroup and who they represent on the ESSA website.	Publish contact information for all workgroup members on the ESSA website and urge partners to encourage stakeholders to reach out to members of the workgroups to provide input and ask questions about the process.	<b>North Dakota</b> <a href="#">published</a> the names, affiliations and contact information for all members of their ESSA subcommittee working groups, along with each group's timeline.
<b>Stakeholder networks:</b> Ask stakeholders to share information with their networks.	Provide stakeholders with sample tweets and language they can use in emails and newsletters to keep their communities informed.	Ask stakeholders to encourage members of their communities to get involved, and urge them to host meetings in their communities to gain additional input.	<b>Ohio</b> invites people to engage on social media using the hashtag #ESSAOhio and gives the option for people to sign up for ESSA email updates.
			<b>Oklahoma</b> created an <a href="#">ESSA newsletter</a> .



## 9. Keep your team informed.

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Access to information:</b> Provide staff with access to internal and external ESSA materials.	Involve senior leaders from across the SEA on the internal ESSA planning team and encourage them to share updates with their staff and solicit input on key decision points.	Hold all staff meetings to brief your internal team on the development of the ESSA plan, answer their questions and solicit their input.	<b>Massachusetts</b> holds optional roundtable discussions regularly for internal staff to enable them to learn more about new initiatives across the agency, discuss policy, ask questions and celebrate successes.
<b>Share materials:</b> Schedule meetings to update internal offices on ESSA planning and solicit input.	Share early copies of materials with offices engaged in the work to ensure content accuracy & language clarity with stakeholders served by the office.	Share outreach materials prepared for external stakeholders at staff meetings, make available online and reference in internal newsletters. Provide staff with talking points, sample presentations and guidance on ESSA so they are prepared to serve as ambassadors or answer questions when working in the field.	<b>Oregon</b> has an internal cross-office team that meets regularly on planning, progress and implementation considerations under ESSA, including the review of stakeholder input and feedback.
<b>Internal work groups:</b> Establish an internal SEA working group that will work collaboratively throughout the ESSA development and implementation process.	Encourage mid-level staff who would not normally be involved in the ESSA working group to participate in subgroups as needed.	Organize internal focus groups to pressure-test new ideas and to gain additional insight and nuance into complex topics.	<b>Wisconsin</b> conducted an <a href="#">internal DOE session structured like a Town Hall</a> forum to gather input from SEA staff.
<b>Encourage widespread involvement:</b> Proactively recruit representatives from within the SEA who work on issues related to students with disabilities and English language learners to participate in the internal working group to ensure their perspectives are heard.	Let SEA staff know about working group meetings and invite them to come to listen. Circulate the names of all internal working group members to the full SEA staff so people with questions or comments will know who from within their units are involved.	Set a regular schedule for meetings and invite staff from offices across the SEA and external partners to present on relevant topics to inform the discussion. Make the meeting agendas and notes available to the full SEA staff.	



## 10. Turn these new connections into long term relationships

Instead of just this	Try doing this	Or even better, do this	State Examples
<b>Stay connected:</b> Thank stakeholders for their participation at the end of public meetings or send auto replies to people who participate in online surveys.	Collect contact information from people who participate in engagement activities in person or online; send out information on the final ESSA plan once it is approved.	Send regular updates to contacts throughout the process to update them on changes that are made and to alert them to additional engagement opportunities along the way.	<b>Connecticut</b> has established stakeholder working groups on key topics and has committed to keeping them engaged at every stage in the ESSA development and implementation process.
<b>Ongoing advisory committees:</b> Create an advisory committee of key organizational leaders to review sections of your plan.	Create a stakeholder working group or advisory committee of representatives from key constituencies from across your state; meet with them regularly to ensure the state's plan is addressing the needs of their communities.	Create one or multiple advisory committees of stakeholders to work closely with the SEA on ongoing basis to ensure that the needs of their communities are continually met after ESSA implementation begins.	<b>Oregon</b> is pairing all stakeholder outreach with a clear call to action to reinforce the value of statewide participation and importance of sustained involvement to improve education.
<b>Stay connected:</b> Ask stakeholders to complete a survey at public events to get their input on engagement efforts, including how they learned about the meeting and how they would want to be engaged in the future.	Schedule quarterly meetings with key external partners to check in on implementation, hear input from their stakeholders and discuss any upcoming changes or shifts in policy.	Work with civil rights, advocacy groups and organizations that represent disability and/or historically underserved communities to identify members of key stakeholder groups to appoint to ongoing committees that will continue to meet throughout ESSA implementation and beyond.	<b>Wisconsin</b> has created an <a href="#">Equity Council</a> that is supporting the development of their state plan and will remain in place after implementation begins to ensure that the state maintains an ongoing focus on equity.
<b>Stay connected:</b> Continue your ongoing ESSA communication efforts (newsletters, etc) after the state plan is approved and transition the content to focus on implementation.	Identify regular points in the state's ESSA implementation when stakeholder input will be needed, publish them on your website and share them with your key external partners and ambassadors.	Seek out new ways to stay engaged with stakeholders, such as making return visits to historically underserved communities and proactively reaching out to them to inform new efforts.	

## Additional Resources to Support Stakeholder Engagement

- [\*\*A Parent's Role in ESSA Implementation\*\*](#)  
National PTA, 2016
- [\*\*Case for Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement\*\*](#)  
Partners for Each and Every Child, 2016
- [\*\*Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement\*\*](#)  
Education Commission of the States, 2016
- [\*\*Communications and Engagement Assessment Rubric\*\*](#) and [\*\*Assessment Rubric State Facilitator's Guide\*\*](#)  
The Reform Support Network, 2013
- [\*\*Educator Evaluation Communications Toolkit\*\*](#)  
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